

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1203

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7235

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, PINS

SUBJECT: GOC EXPELS TOP PDC LEADER

REF: SANTIAGO 7201 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: RENAN FUENTEALBA, EX-SENATOR, EX-PRESIDENT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC), AND SINCE COUP DEFECTO LEADER OF LEFT WING OF PDC, WAS EXPELLED FROM CHILE EVENING NOV 26. ACCORDING GOC ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRIVATE COMMENTS FROM TOP GOC SOURCE, FUENTEALBA'S CRITICAL COMMENTS TO FOREIGN PRESS (AFP) FINALLY ENRAGED CHIEF OF STATE PINOCHET WHO PERSONALLY ORDER IMMEDIATE EXPULSION. GOC SOURCE SAYS "WE ARE AT WAR WITH PDC". END SUMMARY.

2. MORNING PRESS NOV 27 CARRIES FOLLOWING NOTICE: "DEPT OF PUBLIC ORDER OF MIN INTERIOR ISSUED FOLLOWING NOTICE LAST NIGHT: THE CITIZENRY IS INFORMED THAT ON NOV 26 SR. RENAN CONFIDENTIAL

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FUENTEALBA MOENA WAS EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY, AS, IN A

DECLARATION MADE TO A FOREIGN AGENCY (SIC), HE HAS DEFIED THE AUTHORITIES, HAS COMPROMISED THE PRESTIGE OF CHILE ABROAD AND HAS ATTEMPTED TO ALTER THE INTERNAL PEACE. SIMILAR MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE WHO COMMIT ACTIONS OF THIS NATURE".

3. FUENTEALBA IS DISTINGUISHED LEADER OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, FORMER PRES OF PARTY AND SENATOR, WHO HAS BEEN ONE OF TOP LEADERS OF PDC FACTION CRITICAL OF MILITARY JUNTA SINCE COUP. IN RECENT WEEKS HE SENT PRIVATE LETTER TO JUNTA MEMBER GEN LEIGH SEVERELY CRITICAL OF GOC POLICIES, AND PUBLIC LETTER TO MERCURIO CALLING FOR ACTION ON PROBLEM OF PRICE INCREASES. PRESS HAS NOT HAD TIME TO COMMENT ON EXPULSION.

4. BY COINCIDENCE, EMBOFFS HAD ARRANGED INFORMAL DISCUSSION ON MARCOTICS MATTERS IN EMBOFF HOME EVENING NOV 26 WITH UNDER SEC INTERIOR ENRIQUE MONTERO. MONTERO ARRIVED AFTER 11 PM, AGITATED AND EMOTIONAL. HE SAID HE HAD JUST COME FROM AIRPORT, HAVING PERSONALLY PUT FUENTEALBA ON PLANE FOR PANAMA. MONTERO SHOWED EMBOFFS COPY OF STATEMENT QUOTED ABOVE. HE VOLUNTEERED THAT FUENTEALBA HAD BEEN IGNORING GOC ORDERS TO STOP POLITICKING. LAST STRAW WAS INTERVIEW WITH FOREIGN PRESS IN LAST DAY OR TWO (WHICH MONTERO HIMSELF HAD EVIDENTLY NOT SEEN) SEVERELY CRITICAL OF GOC. INTERVIEW APPARENTLY CONTAINED SPECIAL ATTACK ON GOC FOR DETENTION CLAUDIO HUEPE, FORMER PDC DEPUTY, WHO IS SUSPECTED OF CONTACTS WITH OUTLAWED MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR). ACCORDING MONTERO, HUPE WAS CONTACT IN CHILE FOR ARGENTINE EXTREMISTS (ERP), AND ARGENTINE EMBASSY SANTIAGO HAD COMPLAINED TO GOC ABOUT HIM. INTERVIEW WAS SHOWN TO PINOCHET, WHO BECAME ENRAGED AND ORDERED IMMEDIATE EXPULSION OF FUENTEALBA. FUENTEALBA WAS PICKED UP AT HIS OFFICE ON 26TH, TAKEN TO POLICE HQ WHERE HELD UNTIL SPACE FOUND ON PLANE LEAVING IN EVENING. RADIO REPORTS CLAIM NOT EVEN HIS FAMILY WAS AWARE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED UNTIL AFTER HE WAS ACTUALLY AIRBORNE. MONTERO SAID: "WE BOUGHT HIM A TICKET TO PANAMA", IMPLYING THIS WAS FIRST STOP AND WHERE FUENTEALBA WENT AFTER THAT WAS NO CONCERN OF GOC.

5. MONTERO ADDED IN OBVIOUS ANGER THAT "FREI IS NEXT". IN CONTEXT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THIS DID NOT RPT NOT MEAN EX-PRES. CONFIDENTIAL

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EDUARDO FREI IS DEFINITELY TO BE EXPELLED, BUT THAT GOC IS DETERMINED TO SUPPRESS PDC POLITICKING AND THAT EVEN FREI WOULD BE EXPELLED IF HE DID NOT STOP POLITICAL ACTIVITY. MONTERO SAID SEVERAL TIMES "WE ARE AT WAR WITH PDC". WHEN REMINDED OF PROBABLE IMAGE DAMAGE TO CHILE OF THIS EXPULSION, MONTERO LAUNCHED VITRIOLIC ATTACK ON COMMUNISM AND U.S. MISUNDERSTANDING OF DANGER.

6. ASKED ABOUT GOC REACTION TO CARDINAL SILVA'S WORDS AT MAIPU TEMPLE DEDICATION (REFTEL), MONTERO SAID STATEMENT WAS CLEARLY AND HARSHLY DIRECTED AT GOC, AND THAT "CARDINAL IS THE LEADER OF THE RESISTANCE (RESISTENCIA) IN CHILE."

7. COMMENT: FUENTEALBA EXPULSION MAY INAUGURATE NEW STAGE IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILE. IF MONTERO IS CORRECT, IT MAY AMOUNT TO DECLARATION OF WAR ON EVEN RELATIVELY MODERATE CRITICS, AND MAY FINALLY DRIVE FENCE-SITTERS IN PDC AND MUCH OF CHILEAN SOCIETY IN GENERAL INTO FORCED CHOOSING OF POSITIONS. IT ACCELERATES NARROWING OF BASE OF JUNTA'S POLITICAL SUPPORT AND COULD SERVE TO ENCOURAGE PDC-ORIENTED LIBERAL MIDDLE INTO FORCED ASSOCIATION WITH OUTLAWED UP LEFT. THIS ACTION REPRESENTS GAIN FOR HARD-LINE ELEMENTS WITHIN GOC. CHANCES FOR "RECONCILIATION AND PEACE" ASKED FOR BY CARDINAL SEEM TO BE DIMINISHING.
POPPER

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